IV EZRA

A STUDY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSALISM

BY

C. G. MONTEFIORE, D.D., D.LITT.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

G. R. S. MEAD

AND AFTERWORDS BY

H. LOEWE and H. M. ADLER

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NOTE

THE Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture was founded in 1917, under the auspices of the Jewish Historical Society of England, by his collaborators in the translation of "The Service of the Synagogue," with the object of fostering Hebraic thought and learning in honour of an unworldly scholar. The Lecture is to be given annually in the anniversary week of his death, and the lectureship is to be open to men or women of any race or creed, who are to have absolute liberty in the treatment of their subject.

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CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

WE are met together this afternoon to do honour to the memory of Arthur Davis. A careful student of the ancient tongue of Israel, we are indebted to him, a grammarian, for a valuable treatise on the difficult subject of the Accents of the Books of the Bible. A great lover of the beauties of Hebrew literature, we are still more in his debt, as the chief textual reviser and translator of that indispensable New Edition of the *Festival Prayers of the Service of the Synagogue* (6 vols., 1904, etc.). This great undertaking was originated and planned out by him, and, with the help of Mr. Herbert Adler and his own two accomplished daughters, was successfully carried out, though—alas!—he did not himself live to see the whole of it in print. It is, indeed, a delight to read and, in the opinion of those most competent to judge, the best version extant. But Arthur Davis was more than a scholar and a man of letters; as those who have had the privilege of knowing him intimately, tell me, he was universally held in highest respect and was ever a most charming and lovable personality.

This, the twelfth of the Arthur Davis Memorial Lectures, is to be delivered by Dr. Claude G. Montefiore. It is not necessary—indeed, it would be almost impertinent on my part—to introduce our Lecturer to such an audience as this. It would, I feel, be far more fitting for him to introduce me to you. But I cannot refrain from saying how heartily I join with very many others in remembering with gratitude, of recalling how much we learned from, the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, when it was under the very able joint-editorship of Dr. Montefiore and his distinguished colleague, the late Israel Abrahams of highly respected and beloved memory. Again, and speaking as a Gentile, I cannot omit mentioning Dr. Montefiore's sympathetic and discriminating *Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*, now in a second and revised edition. It has made his name most favourably known to Christian scholars throughout the world, and has done no little to help open-minded scholarship towards a new perspective on a number of very important points. Above all, the epithet "Liberal" is most closely associated with our distinguished Lecturer's name; and as such and in that spirit I doubt not he will treat the subject which he has chosen to set before us this afternoon:

"Ezra IV—A Study in the Development of Universalism."

The study of the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic literature has in recent years been well-nigh revolutionized by the researches and labours of many distinguished scholars; it is, indeed, indispensable for a knowledge of the very important critical period between the respective closings of the canons of the Old and New Covenant documents. Now, apocalyptics is a most curious and interesting and instructive study. Its main characteristics are what has been called "apology for unfulfilled prophecy" and its preoccupation with eschatological problems. Of such documents the Salathiel-Ezra apocalypse, as it may be termed, is one of the most noteworthy. Though late—in its present and finally redacted form, say, about 100–120 C.E.—it contains older materials, the most valuable and striking of which is what the Germans would call the *Grundschrift*, and which was indubitably written in Hebrew. It is a courageously expressed and well-argued plea for mercy on the multitude against the apocalyptic orthodoxy of the day, which insisted on the miserable dogma that few, very few, could be saved. Reading it to-day, our sympathies are, must be, with that large-hearted and gallant old Jew of eighteen cen-

turies or more ago. We feel with him, think with him, cheer him on; and at the end profoundly regret that he found himself compelled to bow down his brave spirit under the weight of tradition, that he had to put this final relentless judgment in the mouth of the "Angel of the Lord," and accept the reproof—can it possibly be ironical?—"Dost thou love the creation more than I?"

This nowadays shocking extreme of particularism Dr. Montefiore, from all that we know about him, will presumably show us how to offset, transmute and sublimate, by his "Study in the Development of Universalism", which I now ask him kindly to lay before us, and which, I doubt not—to adapt the wording of a witty summing-up of the result of a famous trial for heresy in this country—will carry on the good work of "dismissing everlasting damnation with costs."

IV EZRA

A Study in the Development of Universalism

IT was with the utmost diffidence that I accepted the kind suggestion that I should give the Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture for this year. The list of former lecturers was sent to me, and I found that the names were either those of big and regular scholars or of distinguished personalities. I am neither a big and regular scholar nor the other thing, so the list—sent, I suppose, to encourage me—produced the opposite effect. I thought, however, that a refusal would be churlish. So here I am. You must not expect anything learned from me, and then you will not be disappointed.

I propose to use IV Ezra, or, as it is called in our English Apocrypha, the second book of Esdras, in the same sort of way as preachers use a Biblical text for their sermons. In other words, I shall make this strange book the starting point for the rambling observations which I am about to inflict upon you. I may assume that most of those present have casually read the book, and perhaps they may also be aware that

scholars consider that at least the main portion of it, and certainly the portion which concerns us to-day, namely chapters 3 to 9, was written by a Jew in Hebrew—the Hebrew original being now lost—about the close of the first century A.D. And perhaps for those who read the book only in the English Apocrypha I ought to add that they must cut off its head and its tail. Chapters 1 and 2 at the beginning have nothing to do with it, nor have chapters 15 and 16 at the end.

The little book is of interest to us from many points of view. First, as an example, and perhaps as the most attractive extant example, of Apocalyptic literature; secondly, as a proof, as well as an example, of the variety of Jewish religious thought at that period—so remarkably different is it from the main Rabbinic trunk and strain. Again, for the history and development of eschatology—the doctrine, that is, of the last things, of the fortunes of the individual soul after death and of the destiny of mankind as a whole—IV Ezra is of considerable value. Then, fourthly, theologically it is of interest and value both in relation to the main stream of Jewish teaching, and more especially in relation to the teaching of St. Paul. All these various interests would be enough for an attractive lecture, but I

am not going to talk about any one of them. It is true I am going to allude to the author's views about what happens to Gentiles and Jews after death, but I shall not attempt to set these forth in a properly calm, historical, and orderly way. Stated very briefly, the doctrine which the author feels himself reluctantly impelled to enunciate and defend is that the vast majority of the human race have gone, and are going, to perdition: as to the Jews, things are rather better, but, even with them, not so very much. What exactly will be the ultimate lot of the lost I am not entirely clear; whether they will be finally annihilated, or whether they will suffer eternal torments in hell, is not definitely stated, but, at any rate, they will never be "saved"; they will never attain to the felicity and the beatitude which await the righteous few. The views of the author as expressed in this awful and cheerless doctrine would be of very small concern to us to-day were it not for a most peculiar circumstance which, to my mind, constitutes the dominating interest and value of his book. The writer hates, and rebels against, the doctrine which he feels obliged to teach. Two currents of thought perplex him: the one broad, the other narrow. The narrow doctrine is the accepted doctrine of his group; he believes it to

be the truth; he believes it to be the teaching which God Himself wishes him to teach; it is, in that sense, revealed doctrine; therefore, it is good and right, and to doubt it is improper and wrong. Nevertheless, there is a rebellious thought within him which *does* doubt it; which, more or less clearly, more or less dimly, sees its hatefulness, its pitilessness, its injustice. The doubts and complaints he puts into his own mouth; the orthodox doctrine into the mouth of an angel. Never did he anticipate that a day would come when Jews and Gentiles would read with sympathy and approbation his own wrestlings, murmurings, and reproaches, and would quietly regard the teachings of his angel as obsolete and outworn. That the honours should go to his doubts, that the future lay with them, that his God would seem to a distant generation rather a Moloch than a Father—all this was hidden from his eyes. I wish I had time to read to you some of his complaints and expostulations, but you doubtless remember them. We may compare him with the author of Job, and his doubts with Job's doubts. Moreover, there is a certain similarity in the upshot, for though, in Job, the orthodoxy of the friends is adjudged to be wrong, yet are we bidden to smother and stifle doubt by a firm belief in the inscrutable wisdom

of God. But in IV Ezra the opposition between right belief and unjustifiable doubt is still more poignant. For in Job, while God does not approve of the hero's temerities and audacities, still less does he approve of the utterances of the friends. Whereas in IV Ezra God, through his accredited messenger, defends the old orthodoxy in one of its (to us) worst and weakest points, he presses it, and emphasizes it, and seeks to prove its reasonableness and universality—as, e.g., in the argument that the precious is everywhere the few, so that it is right and reasonable that the saved should be few—and yet all the time he claims to be a just and merciful God. After he has urged poor Ezra to be of good cheer in the certain knowledge that the vast majority of mankind must be eternally lost, he utters the sublime and yet ludicrous paradox: "Dost thou love the creation more than I its creator?"

Large credit seems due to this tender-hearted Jew of old, who was stricken with pity for the awful pathos and tragedy of the lot of man. Even supposing that almost all human beings are desperately sinful, oppressors of Israel on the one hand (which to the writer is itself a sin), violators of the Law upon the other; yet why, if almost all must and do sin like that—

why were they created? How can it possibly have been worth while? O fortunate beasts, he cries, who have no fore-knowledge of their lot; or who, if they have no heaven for very few, have also no hell for very many! Especial credit is due to our author for his solicitude about the fate of the Gentiles, a solicitude none the less real because at last, after several arguments with the angel, and after much censure is poured upon his doubts, he gives vent to the quaint surrender: "Touching man in general thou must know best, but touching Israel only will I now speak."

A useful edition of IV Ezra, even in addition to the fine work of Professor Box, is that by Gunkel in the collection of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament edited by Kautzsch and published some twenty-nine years ago. In his excellent introduction Gunkel makes a remark which has always greatly struck me. I fear I have quoted it many times. He says that "pity for sinners who remain sinners to the end is foreign to strong, ethical religions, and therefore foreign also to the Gospel." Whether Gunkel also means that *we* ought not, that it is not ethical, to have pity for sinners who remain sinners to the end, I do not know. But even if he meant that, and, meaning

that, was wrong, he may, nevertheless, be right in his main thesis. He is right, at all events, of the past. For those who in days of old wrought the biggest deeds—many of them deeds of greatest benefit to humanity—were often men who believed without compunction in eternal hells and such like, and had little pity for heretics and unrepentant sinners. Our tender-hearted Ezra could have done no great deeds, and his influence has been but small. Though Calvin undoubtedly believed that heaps and heaps of people would suffer for all eternity indescribable tortures in hell, though he hated toleration and burnt Servetus, he was not only a greater man than his enemy Castellion, but exercised upon the whole a greater influence for good.

That is one passing reflection about our Ezra. I leave it to come to another feature about our author which he shares, more or less, with all the apocalyptic writers. His outlook embraces humanity as a whole. He has a world outlook.

How did world outlooks come about in Near Eastern antiquity? Largely, I suppose, by religion on the one hand, and partly by the appearance of what we now should call 'empires' upon the other. But till Alexander the world outlook, apart from religion, was

merely practical or selfish. The ruler sought to subject as many nations as he could to his sway, and to incorporate as many races as he could within his kingdom. Except in Greece, it was, I take it, only through religion that reflection about mankind, its origin and its destiny, began. I will come back to Greece, but otherwise confining my attention, in my ignorance, to Israel, it would seem that a world outlook was begun by the Prophets; yet, as nothing starts from nothing, it was prepared for them by the old cosmogonies, by stories about creation and man's early history, and more immediately by the appearance of the Assyrians. Israel's God became the world God in reaction to the world power of Assyria, and consequently the world's races came, as it were, within the horizon and under the purview of the messengers of Israel's God. In a memorable and eloquent passage, which originally formed part of his famous sketch of Israel's religious and political history, written for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and which has rightly been retained in all the editions of his *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte*, Wellhausen brings out this point most vividly. "The Assyrians introduced a new factor, the conception of world empire, or more generally of the world, into the history of the nations. In

presence of that conception the petty nationalities lost their centre of gravity, brute fact dispelled their illusions, they flung their gods to the moles and to the bats. The Prophets of Israel alone did not allow themselves to be taken by surprise by what had occurred, or to be plunged in despair; they solved by anticipation the grim problem which history set before them. They absorbed into their religion that conception of the world which was destroying the religions of the nations, even before it had been fully grasped by the secular consciousness. Where others saw only the ruin of everything that is holiest, they saw the triumph of Yahveh over delusion and error. Whatever else might be overthrown, the really worthy remained unshaken. They recognized ideal powers only, right and wrong, truth and falsehood; second causes were matters of indifference to them, they were no practical politicians. But they watched the course of events attentively—nay, with passionate interest. The present, which was passing before them, became to them, as it were, the plot of a divine drama which they watched with an intelligence that anticipated the *dénouement*. Everywhere the same goal of the development, everywhere the same laws. The nations are the *dramatis personæ*,

Israel the hero, Yahveh the maker of the tragedy."

Though the nations were usually regarded by the Prophets as God's instruments for the chastisement, as later for the exaltation and benefit, of Israel, yet this point of view is occasionally transcended, and it is remarkable how the very earliest of them seems to be in some ways the most impartial and universalistic. If the text is sound—about which, I admit, doubts have been expressed—the rhetorical questions of Amos, "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? Have not I brought up Israel from Egypt and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?", are among the most amazing and least paralleled in the whole Hebrew Bible. In the sixteen chapters of Isaiah from xl. to lv. the Prophet includes the whole inhabited world within his vision: Israel possesses a certain primacy, and its own particular enemies are annihilated, but otherwise, in the common acknowledgment and worship of one and the same God, brought about, at least partially, by Israel's preaching, all mankind is, to some extent, united together, and a certain equality is conferred upon all. The universalism of Deutero-Isaiah was not maintained in its purity, but one of the very latest exponents

of the decadent prophetic movement coined that phrase of Yahveh's universal kingship which won so prominent a place in all subsequent Jewish thought: "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall the Lord be One and His name One." Nor must that strange and striking parity between Israel, Syria, and Egypt in the late 19th chapter of Isaiah be ignored, even in a cursory enumeration such as this, or that wonderful picture of future peace among the nations in Isaiah ii., the date of which is entirely uncertain. Of that passage it was that the eminent philosopher, psychologist, and philologian, Steinthal said: "Höheres als jenes Fragment giebt es auf Erden nicht." For my present purpose the interest of the fragment consists in this, that it envisages the future of mankind from what Dr. Jacks would call the human end, whereas most of the prophetic teachers look at it from the divine end. They are less concerned with human unity and human happiness than with the glory and universal sovereignty of Israel's God.

Between even the latest of the Prophets and the author of IV Ezra the doctrine of a resurrection and of eternal beatitudes or eternal miseries arises in Israel—that doctrine of which Gunkel rightly said that it cuts the whole

religious history of Israel sharply into two unequal parts—all that was before it and all that came after it. The lot of man became more grave. On the one hand, indeed, earthly suffering was of less importance, or even earthly prosperity: the eternal future could compensate for seeming injustice one way or the other. But on the other hand, if man may or must look forward to an eternity of weal or woe, his attitude, not merely towards himself but also to his neighbour, tended to undergo a change. It ought to be more awful to contemplate perpetual hell for masses of human beings, even if they are of another nation and creed than your own, than to think of their destruction and death for good and all. To bring to them the key to heaven, if you suppose that this key is in your own possession, becomes, one might suppose, a more interesting, and also a more urgent and more merciful, undertaking than to introduce them at the best to a brief period of truth and felicity upon earth. The missionary work of Christianity was sharpened and increased by such considerations. Nevertheless, the horror of eternal infelicity or pain for a large proportion of humanity was far more lightly borne than one would have thought conceivable. For the outsider was either the unbeliever or the enemy or

both. And consequently his fate was contemplated—at any rate, so far as he refused to see the light—with calm, if not with a certain grim satisfaction. For some big and even noble minds to behold from heaven the torments of the damned in hell would have been a justifiable increase of the beatitude of heaven. Such an idea seems inconceivable to *us*, but it is extremely revealing for our knowledge of human nature and for the history of religion. Yet, in Christianity, the doctrine of heaven and hell undoubtedly increased a world interest—sharpened the world-outlook—by the new, or the augmented, desire to convert the unbeliever to the truth. For long, however, it did not make any considerable difference in men's attitude towards human misery and human felicity upon earth. Indeed, it tended to make many people more careless of earthly wrongs because a possible eternity of beatitude deprived them of larger importance. So, too, the Rabbis were not without their own special doctrine of universalism: the famous *Alenu* prayer imagines and prays for a world united in the knowledge and worship of one God. Yet what the cost would be both on earth and in hell before this desired result was achieved troubled them (so far as it concerned the Gentile) as little as what the cost would be

before all mankind was orthodox Christian seems to have troubled the Christian Fathers. St. Paul was a much greater man than the author of IV Ezra, and he achieved a noble universalism in which distinctions of race and nation were broken down. Yet even he (just because of his strength and greatness) had not that peculiar and wistful, though ineffective, tenderness and pity which characterize the apocalyptic Ezra.

Meanwhile, the old oppositions remained, or new ones were created. To the Jew there remained the old opposition between Israel and non-Israel, which was not quite the same as the new opposition in Christianity between believer and unbeliever. Christianity made for unity and peace, but also for severance and hatred. If it united by conversion, by an increased interest because of the desire to convert, and by a common faith which transcended the differences of race, it made the differences between believer and unbeliever, between heretic and orthodox, even wider than those between nation and nation: it made human hatreds and human animosities more fierce, more virulent, more bitter. There is no love like religious love; there is no hatred like religious hatred. "Do I not hate them that hate thee" (and the unbeliever and

the heretic both hate God): "I hate them with perfect hatred." And as these awful words come from what Ibn Ezra not unjustly called the noblest of the Psalms, so some of the earth's noblest have not been least wanting in hate. A world-outlook pity for doomed humanity was undoubtedly present in the mind of that early Christian and genius who wrote: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life, and that the world should be saved through Him." Yet this Son "prays not for the world," but only "for those whom His Father has given him." The unbelieving Jews shall die in their sins: they are of their father the devil. The cleavage between the redeemed and the wicked is complete, and the author of the Fourth Gospel was not only convinced that those who rejected the Son would perish everlastingly, but also accepted their fate with complete equanimity and even a certain hardly concealed satisfaction. Nevertheless, whatever their limitations, it was through religion that Paul and the author of the Fourth Gospel were enabled to look upon mankind as a whole, without distinction of race or nationality, and if, on the one hand, they held that salvation after death depended upon adhering to certain

theological beliefs, yet, on the other hand, they devised schemes whereby unrestricted numbers of men, if they did not wilfully refuse to accept the truth, or if God had not predestined them for hell, could be rescued from perdition and doom. And the schemes appeared to them so beneficent and loving on God's part that they did not worry at all because of the exceptions. A few millions lost in the process did not apparently matter. It was religion which made a world-outlook more effective. Our poor Ezra's tender heart was, after all, wrung to little purpose. Those others, at all events, did try to prevent the dungeons of hell from being too inordinately filled.

Thus did the belief in one God make the conception of human brotherhood more effective. But we have to recognize that our modern world-outlooks were not solely produced by Jewish and Christian theologies and by Jewish and Christian religions. We have even to recognize that these theologies and religions were given a push forward by influences outside themselves, though indirectly, and from afar, they may have had a hand in producing them. The humanitarian and equalitarian movements of modern times were not, as we know, *solely* prompted by religion. It may perhaps be said

that the men who started and worked in them were themselves, in the last resort, the product of a Christian civilization, but some of them, though by no means all of them, were unorthodox or freethinkers. Or we may put it this way. We may assert that ethical ideas and ideals of justice and pity reacted upon religious and theological ideas and drove them forward. In the formative and most creative days of Judaism, and in early Christianity, there had been, as we might put it, a movement downwards from God to man; now there was a movement upwards from man to God. Conceptions of God had erstwhile purified conceptions about man and of his relations to his fellows; now conceptions about man purified conceptions of God. Moreover, these conceptions about man were not by any means merely due to theological and religious ideas absorbed and then forgotten; they were ultimately due, or at least partially due, to that second source from which our world outlooks are descended; they were due to the Greeks, and through the Greeks to the Romans; they were due to Greek thought and to Greek action, to Roman thought and to Roman action. The world-outlook of the Stoics and the world-outlook of Alexander, the world-outlook of the Roman Empire and of the great Roman jurists: these, combined with, or taken

up into, Christianity, moulding, and moulded by, the world-outlook of Christianity, which itself inherited and enlarged the world-outlook of Judaism—all these helped to fashion the world-outlook of to-day.

It is needless for me and impossible to speak, even in outline, about Stoic universalism or cosmopolitanism. Yet it is fitting to note that we have in Stoicism a system of ethics which was rooted in theology, while Zeno, as people are now fond of reminding us, was no pure Greek. Yet it is as a philosopher, and not as a prophet, that Zeno propounded his doctrine. His theology was a part of his philosophy, and one can hardly say that it is his pantheistic divinity who enjoins men to love or unite with their fellows; from their own inner reason, albeit that reason is divine, they perceive the good and the true. Yet for the Stoic the ordered Kosmos, which was God, was his larger and veritable country. All men are members of one body; the separate states and cities and kingdoms are only as households of one comprehensive whole. One touch of divinity—the spark of reason—makes the whole world kin. If God and men are akin, said Epictetus—and Zeno would have agreed with him—it is less true to say, if you are asked, "What is your

country?", "I am an Athenian" than to reply, "I am a citizen of the universe." The only valid distinction among men is between good and bad, wise and ignorant. Man must help his brother and seek to serve him, not as fellow countryman, but as fellow man. "Ubicunque homo est, ibi beneficii locus est." The Stoics did not attack slavery as an institution, for all the social life of antiquity rested upon it, but essentially they rose above it, regarding it as unnatural, and in practice urging that slaves should be treated with humanity and consideration. As slaves are men, they are of the same stock, and bear within them the same divinity, as their masters. Stoicism gave a theoretic basis and completion to the occasional protests which from time to time isolated Greek thinkers had made against Greek particularism. It is interesting to compare Greek particularism with Jewish particularism. So far as the Jews regarded themselves as superior to other races and nations, it was because, by the grace and favour of God, it had been given them to know him and to receive his Law. And the nations, as idolators and as oppressors of Israel, were for the most part not only enemies of God and of his people, but also wicked. Idolatry was wickedness: idolators tended also to be regarded as fools: for idolatry

was folly and ignorance. To the Greeks the outer world, the barbarians, were "lesser breeds" too, but not because they were "without the Law." It was not the possession of the knowledge of the true God and of his will which marked them off from the barbarian, but the possession of a finer nature, of a higher culture, of a more rational polity, of a more developed reason.[1] How such views were broken down cannot be mentioned here. But it deserves notice that Isocrates already (Panegyricus 50) asserted that Athens "had brought it about that the name 'Hellenes' suggests no longer a race, but an intelligence, and that the title 'Hellenes' is applied rather to those who share our culture than to those who share a common blood."[2] Precisely in the same way Philo—partly no doubt influenced by his Stoic and other Greek authorities—spoke of the higher unity of belief which transcends the lower unity of blood.[3] Dion Cassius (xxxvii. 17) remarks that the name of Jew is given to those who imitate or adopt their laws, though they may be of alien nationality. Both Judaism and Hellenism could thus

[1] Cp. Herodotus, I, 60.

[2] Dr. Norlin's translation in the Loeb series.

[3] *De Nobilitate* (Philonis opera, ed. Cohn and Wendland, vol. v, p. 326; Mangey, ii, p. 438).

become world-wide: the two most precious gifts of God need not be limited to a single country or a single race.

But the most extraordinary thing is that even before Zeno began to teach in Athens, Alexander the Great had, as it were, attempted beforehand to translate some of Zeno's ideas into somewhat rough and ready, but yet so far unheard of, reality. I cannot do better than quote two writers about Alexander—one ancient and one modern. The ancient writer is Plutarch, in his essay *Concerning the Fortune or Virtue of Alexander the Great.* He points out how, in his treatise on the Ideal State, which Plutarch knew and read, but of which we only possess the tiniest fragments, Zeno had urged that we "should not live a divided life, city by city and people by people, each with its own system of rights, but that we should regard all men as of one people and city with ourselves, so that we should share one life and one discipline, like a flock growing up in a common pasture under a common ordinance. But whereas Zeno designed and fashioned his constitution as a vision or image of a well-governed philosophic constitution, Alexander made the vision a reality. For he did not follow Aristotle's advice: he refused to treat Greeks as a commander and barbarians as a master,

paying regards to Greeks as friends and kinsmen, and behaving to barbarians as mere animals or plants, and so filling his empire with wars and exiled and rankling factions. No; he believed himself to have come from God to adjust and reconcile the world, and compelling with his arms those whom he could not unite by argument, he brought together elements from all quarters, and by mingling, as in one common bowl of friendship, men's lives and manners, their marriages and behaviour, he enjoined upon all to regard the inhabited world as their fatherland, and the army as its citadel and garrison, the good as kinsmen, and the bad as foreigners, so that the distinction between Greek and barbarian nature was no longer to be marked by cloak or shield or dagger or burnous, but the mark of the Greek was to be virtue and of the barbarian its opposite: raiment and food, marriage and ways of life were to be shared by all through the mixture of blood and offspring. . . . For he did not overrun Asia like a bandit, nor purpose to rend and ravage it as if it were the plunder and spoil of an unexpected victory, as Hannibal did later with Italy. On the contrary, he framed his conduct as one who desired to make all upon earth subject to one reason and one constitution, and to declare all

mankind to be one people. And if the divine power which sent Alexander here on earth had not speedily recalled him, the sunshine of one law would have looked down upon all men, and they would have all lived in the common light of one law." In his quaint experiments with clothes and marriages Alexander sought to express the ideal of his world-outlook.

My modern writer is Mr. Tarn in a true and eloquent page of the *Cambridge Ancient History*: "When (in a famous scene at Opis) he prayed for a union of hearts and a joint commonwealth of Macedonians and Persians, Alexander proclaimed for the first time, through a brotherhood of peoples, the brotherhood of man. True, it perhaps meant to him only a brotherhood of certain aristocracies, though he is reported to have said that all men were sons of one Father; but he, first of all men, was ready to transcend national differences, and to declare, as Paul was to declare, that there was 'neither Greek nor barbarian.' Alexander inspired Zeno's vision of a world in which all men should be members one of another, citizens of one State without distinction of race or institutions, subject only to, and in harmony with, the Common Law immanent in the Universe, and united in one social life, not by compulsion, but only by

their own willing consent, or (as he put it) by Love. The splendour of this hopeless dream may remind us that not one, but two of the great lines of social-political thought that have divided the world since go back to Alexander of Macedon. For if, as many believe, there is a line of descent from his divine kingship, through Roman Emperor and medieval Pope, to the great despotisms of yesterday, despotisms 'by the grace of God,' there is certainly a line of descent from his prayer at Opis, through the Stoics and one portion of the Christian ideal, to that brotherhood of all men which was proclaimed, though only proclaimed, in the French Revolution. The torch Alexander lit for long only smouldered; perhaps it still only smoulders to-day; but it never has been, and never can be, quite put out." And even this does not go quite far enough. For Roman Emperor and medieval Pope did not merely start a line of descent to modern despotisms: they also themselves are links and agencies in the world-outlook of to-day. Augustus and his successors renewed the conception, and in a measure fulfilled or made actual the ideals, which were, as it would seem, before the mind of Alexander. And the cosmopolitan conceptions of the Stoics were partly responsible for the universalist ideas of the

great Roman jurists, with their ideas of a natural law common to all the races of man and binding upon the world at large. In the person of Marcus Aurelius a Stoic ruled the world, and nowhere in antiquity is the sense of human brotherhood, the unity of mankind, more intensely, or even more poignantly, expressed than in those sad, and yet bracing, reflections of his which an amazing good fortune has preserved for the delight and astonishment of the world. A sense of mission was not wanting to the nobler spirits of Rome. It is hardly necessary to quote the familiar Virgilian lines: "Hae tibi erunt artes; pacisque imponere morem, parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos." To some extent this sense of belonging to a single world empire was felt by thousands who were neither Italians nor even Europeans. The grandiloquent words of Claudian at the opening of the fifth century were not wholly unjustified: " 'Tis she alone who has received the conquered into her bosom, and like a mother, not an empress, protected the human race with a common name, summoning those whom she has defeated to share her citizenship, and drawing together distant races with bonds of affection. To her rule of peace we owe it that the world is our home, that we can live where we please, and that to visit Thule and explore

its once dreaded wilds is but a sport; thanks to her all and sundry may drink the waters of the Rhône and quaff Orontes' stream, thanks to her we are all one people."[1] And some twenty years later, and only ten years before the sack of Rome by Alaric, we have these fine words of Rutilius:

"Thou hast made of alien realms one fatherland:
The lawless found their gain beneath thy sway;
Sharing thy laws with them thou hast subdued,
Thou hast made a city of the once wide world."[2]

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[1] "Haec [i.e. Rome] est in gremium victos quae sola recepit
humanumque genus communi nomine fovit
matris, non dominae ritu, civesque vocavit
quos domuit nexuque pio longinqua revinxit.
huius pacificis debemus moribus omnes,
quod veluti patriis regionibus utitur hospes;
quod sedem mutare licet; quod cernere Thylen
lusus et horrendos quondam penetrare recessus;
quod bibimus passim Rhodanum, potamus Orontem;
quod cuncti gens una sumus."

—*On Stilicho's Consulship*, III, 150–159. Mr. Platnauer's translation in the Loeb Series.

[2] "Fecisti patriam diversis gentibus unam:
Profuit iniustis, te dominante, capi;
Dumque offers victis proprii consortia iuris,
Urbem fecisti, quod prius orbis erat."

—*De Reditu Suo*, I, 62–66. Dr. Savage Armstrong's translation.

The nobler spirits among the Christian clergy and scholars were quite conscious of this world-outlook and world-unity which had been produced by Rome: it was, they thought, devised by God that Christ should be born at such a time and in such an environment: the world empire of Rome, and that very ease and rapidity of communication of which Claudian speaks, made it possible for the message and the proffered salvation of Christianity to be more readily made known to all mankind. I have no time to speak of Augustine and the "de civitate Dei." The Church sometimes felt itself to be the heir of, if not the substitute for, the Empire. Moreover, what was wanting in the universalism of the Empire was to some extent supplied by the Church. Stoicism—at all events in its later developments—was by no means merely stoic in our usual signification of the word. It included something of benevolence, of charity, of good will, of gentleness, and even of compassion, in the ambit of the virtues. It desired to mitigate the many cruelties of ancient civilization; it pleaded for justice and pity to the slave. Nevertheless, it neither looked forward, as the Jewish prophets looked forward, to a golden age upon earth, nor did it look forward to a redeemed and regenerated kingdom of souls, or of transfigured

bodies and souls, in another sphere beyond the grave. There was in it a certain sad acquiescence in the inevitable sadnesses and frailties and sins of a necessarily always imperfect humanity. "Bear and forbear" was its message, rather than "Go forth, strive, redeem and rescue, renounce and overcome." To some extent Christianity supplied what was wanting, and filled up the gaps. But only to some extent and with many limitations. The task was too gigantic; the evils with which it had to cope too huge; the human material, from which its teachers and officers had to be recruited, too inadequate. The balance between this world and the next was not properly kept. What mattered the life of earth if you could secure for yourself and for your flocks the life of eternity? But from the special point of view of this rambling lecture another evil soon arose. Though the Church had a world-outlook for earth, it failed to make this outlook adequately effective by wise, sustained, and practical efforts to establish upon earth the Kingdom of God and the Brotherhood of Man. But still worse was the inadequacy of its universalism in relation to the world to come—the life beyond the grave. Not only did it preach intolerance and cruelty towards those who could not adopt the fullness of its dogmas, or

towards those who refused to come within its pale, but it greatly narrowed the range of God's grace, even as our poor Ezra narrowed it, but, unlike him, with little trace of scruple or compunction; it intensified to an appalling degree the fear and the horrors of an everlasting and excruciatingly agonizing hell. The universalism of the Medieval Church was a universalism of terror, and the world to come was less of a blessed hope and a consolation than an agony and a dread. "It was a commonplace," says the learned Dr. Coulton, "that the majority of the human race went to hell. This is accepted even by St. Thomas Aquinas, who among all medieval philosophers is specially remarkable for his balance of judgment; other writers often reckon the saved as only one in a thousand or in ten thousand or more."[1] Yet from a very early period in the history of the Christian Church voices were raised in favour of the larger and fuller life, and such a book as Allin's *Universalism Asserted* shows that a considerable number of the Church Fathers had leanings towards, or wrote more or less clearly and definitely on the side of, a complete Universalism—that is, the ultimate extinction of evil and sin, and the reconciliation of all human souls, sometimes

[1] Harmsworth's *History of the World*, vol. v, p. 3014.

even of all the fallen angels as well, with God. Then only can He be "all in all." Origen's teaching on the subject was very influential, and some of those who came after him spoke even more definitely than he. It is interesting, because not often done, to quote a few of Origen's own words. His usual way of looking at the matter is not ours. It is philosophical or theological speculation which mainly leads him on to his universalism rather than ethical considerations, or the inconsistency of any other theory with the love and compassion and justice of God. He makes immense use of, and lays enormous stress upon, the words of Paul about how at the "end" all things shall be put under subjection to Christ, who will put all his enemies under his feet. "Then shall the Son also himself be subjected to the Father that God may be all in all." "If this subjection of the Son to the Father," says Origen, "be regarded as good and salutary, it is a valid and logical deduction that the subjection of enemies to the Son of God is also to be regarded as salutary and useful. Consequently as the subjection of the Son to the Father is said to mark the perfect restoration of all creation, so when all enemies are said to be subjected to the Son, the salvation of these subjects and the reformation of the lost is to be

understood by it."[1] The "lost" who are to be saved appear to mean not only human souls, but also the fallen angels and the very devil himself. For the rational substance which God has created cannot perish. What will perish is the hostile will. Nothing which God has created God cannot heal. "Non est insanabile aliquid factori suo." This would seem to be the noble reply to the objection that a will which has become deliberately hostile to God is incurable by God.[2] Later on the larger hope and teaching dwindled. Only a few isolated thinkers such as

[1] "Si ergo bona et salutaris accipitur ista subiectio, qua subiectus esse dicitur filius patri, valde consequens et cohaerens est ut et inimicorum quae dicitur filio dei esse subiectio salutaris quaedam intellegatur et utilis; ut sicut cum dicitur filius patri subiectus, perfecta universae creaturae restitutio declaratur, ita cum filio dei inimici dicuntur esse subiecti, subiectorum salus in eo intellegatur et reparatio perditorum."—*De Principiis*, Book III, chap. v, §7, ed. Koeltschau, 1913.

[2] "Propterea namque etiam novissimus inimicus, qui mors appellatur, destrui dicitur, ut neque ultra triste sit aliquid, ubi mors non est, neque diversum sit, ubi non est inimicus. Destrui sane novissimus inimicus ita intelligendus est, non ut substantia eius quae a deo facta est pereat, sed ut propositum et voluntas inimica, quae non a deo sed ab ipso processit, intereat. Destruetur ergo, non ut non sit, sed ut inimicus et mors non sit. Nihil enim omnipotenti impossibile est, nec insanabile est aliquid factori suo; propterea enim fecit omnia, ut essent; et ea, quae facta sunt, ut essent, non esse non possunt."—*Ibid.*, Book III, chap. vi, §5.

John Scotus Erigena ventured to hold or express it; beyond them it is found only among obscure and persecuted heretical sects till comparatively modern times. Erigena's words are very striking. I give the passage which is cited in D. Maurice's now neglected *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy* (vol. i, p. 499, ed. 1875): "How can evil and the death of eternal torments remain for ever in that humanity the whole of which the Word of God took into Himself and redeemed; whereas true reason teacheth that nothing contrary to the divine goodness, and life, and blessedness, can be co-eternal with them. For the divine goodness will consume evil, eternal life will absorb death and misery."[1] But for the most part, for well-nigh a thousand years, the doctrines which tormented the soul of our tender-hearted Ezra were not held to be inconsistent with God's love (Does not, as a

[1] "Porro si malitia et mors et miseria naturae adeo conditae repugnans, neque in causa omnium facta, neque ejus particeps est; miror qua ratione deliberas et haesitas, malitiam mortemque aeternorum tormentorum in humanitate quam totam Dei verbum in seipso assumptam liberavit, aeternaliter permansuram; cum vera ratio doceat nullum contrarium divinae bonitati vitaeque ac beatitudini posse esse coaeternum. Divina siquidem bonitas consumet malitiam, aeterna vita absorbet mortem, beatitudo miseriam."—*De Divisione Naturae*, Book V, chap. xxvii.

friend reminds me, Dante put over the gate of hell the amazing words: "Justice moved my lofty Maker; the divine power, the supreme wisdom and the *primal love* made me"?); they worried the minds of hardly anybody.[1] It was a maimed universalism that existed throughout these ages. If humanity is one upon earth, it is severed for ever into saved and lost beyond the grave. Mr. Lecky quotes some awful sentences from St. Thomas Aquinas: "A beatis nihil subtrahi debet quod ad perfectionem beatitudinis eorum pertineat. Unumquodque autem ex comparatione contrarii magis cognoscitur: quia contraria juxta se posita magis elucescunt. Et ideo, ut beatitudo sanctorum eis magis complaceat, et de ea uberiores gratias Deo agant, datur eis ut poenam impiorum perfecte intueantur."[2] More-

[1] Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore;
Fecemi la divina potestate,
La summa sapienza et il primo amore.

[2] *Supplementum tertiae partis Summae theologiae*, quaestio xciv, "De modo quo se sancti habebunt erga damnatos," Art I, vol. xii, p. 226, col. 2, in the edition of the *opera omnia jussu et impensaque Leonis*, xiii, P.M. edn., Rome 1906; Lecky, *History of Rationalism*, vol. i, p. 319, *n.* 1, edn. 1880. I have, however, quoted the passage from the fuller and more accurate text of the new authoritative edition of Aquinas's works. For the views of Aquinas about hell, cp. Wicksteed (Philip H.), *Reactions between Dogma and Philosophy*, illustrated from the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, 1910, pp. 246–53, 318–24.

over, it is probable that there was more than one kind of reaction from cruel conceptions of hell to cruel conduct towards man. Mr. Lecky has stressed the connection of relentless conceptions of God's dealings with sinners and heretics in hell with persecution and torture of unbelievers and heretics on earth. He points out that when men generally believed "that the truth of Christianity implied the eternal torture of a vast proportion of their fellow creatures," when the Deity was represented as confining his affection to a small section of his creatures, and inflicting on all others the most horrible and eternal suffering, when such doctrines were not only believed, but intensely realized and constantly brought before the mind, they produced in a few chosen spirits missionary lives of "heroic and disinterested zeal," and "an intensity of compassion," but in many more they produced "callousness and a positive inclination to inflict suffering upon the heretic." Or there may be a combination: on the one hand, "courage and self-sacrifice," on the other, "a readiness to inflict as to endure suffering." Such were the men "who chanted their *Te Deums* over the massacre of the Albigenses or of St. Bartholomew, who were at once the instigators and the agents of that horrible detailed persecution

which stained almost every province of Europe with the blood of Jews and heretics, and exhibited an amount of cold, passionless, studied, and deliberate barbarity unrivalled in the history of mankind."[1]

[1] *History of Rationalism*, vol. i, pp. 318–327, edn. 1880.—Farrar, in his *Lives of the Fathers*, remarks that Augustine held that "an external fact—Adam's single sin—had, by some unique quality of its own, so totally depraved, distorted, vitiated, and empoisoned the whole nature of all his millions of descendants in all ages, that they were incapable of any good whatever, and could only be changed by an external act, baptism, which was so indispensable that every person dying unbaptized is eternally lost; and even infants dying unbaptized cannot be saved. The result is that mankind as a whole is a lost and condemned mass, doomed even before they were born to endless agonies." "Punishments are not meant to purify, but ever to illustrate the divine justice; it would not be unjust if all men were eternally punished, but a very few are saved to illustrate the divine mercy. The majority 'praedestinati sunt in aeternum ignem ire cum diabolo.' " It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, though Farrar does not bring the two points together, that "Augustine must bear the fatal charge of being the first, as well as one of the ablest, defenders of the frightful cause of persecution and intolerance. He was the first to misuse the words, 'Compel them to come in,' of the parable—a fragmentary phrase wholly unsuited to bear the weight of horror for which it was made responsible. He was the first and ablest asserter of the principle which led to Albigensian crusades, Spanish armadas, Netherlands butcheries, St. Bartholomew massacres, the accursed infamies of the Inquisi-

It is, on the other hand, reasonable and logical enough that universalists—those who believe in a real God of compassion, and not merely a nominal one, a real God of love, and not merely a nominal one, those who believe that God's compassion and love are not less than man's love and man's pity, but infinitely more,—should also be tender and compassionate towards men. It is reasonable that those who believe in God's justice as not less than man's should also desire justice towards man. Therefore, universalists are likely to be more just and pitiful towards

tion, the vile espionage, the hideous balefires of Seville and Smithfield, the racks, the gibbets, the thumbscrews, the subterranean torture-chambers used by churchly torturers who assumed 'the garb and language of priests with the trade and temper of executioners,' to sicken, crush, and horrify the revolted conscience of mankind. The spirit of Paganism was not intolerant. Libanius and Julian knew that fire and sword may make martyrs and may make hypocrites, but cannot change a man's real faith. They felt that *Deorum injuriae Dis curae*. It is mainly because of his later intolerance that the influence of Augustine falls like a dark shadow across the centuries. It is thus that an Arnold of Citeaux, a Torquemada, a Sprenger, an Alva, a Philip the Second, a Mary Tudor, a Charles IX, and a Louis XIV can look up to him as an authorizer of their enormities, and quote his sentences to defend some of the vilest crimes which ever caused men to look with horror on the religion of Christ and the Church of God" (Vol. ii, pp. 600, 601, 536, 537).

all men, and especially towards those who differ from them in opinion, than those who believe in eternal punishment and endless hell. It is probable that in their world-outlook the universalists would hold views about human brotherhood, and about problems connected with non-European and coloured and savage races, which would tend towards justice and humanity. It would seem probable that the two sets of ideas would go together, and exercise a reciprocal influence upon one another. Universalists in religious belief would tend to be, if the phrase may be permitted, universalists in conduct.

And so, too, the conception of unity amid diversity, which is an ideal for earth, would tend to strengthen a belief in that ideal for the life beyond the grave. Human justice and pity would point forward to divine justice and pity, and the belief in divine justice and pity would promote the desire for pity and justice towards all mankind.

Nevertheless, in spite of the prevailing doctrine of eternal hell, Christianity, teaching, as it did, the value of every human soul unto God, the equality of all true believers before him, to whatever race they might belong, and the duty which lay upon such believers to propagate the truth, did do something to unite mankind

together. The duty of spreading and imparting the truth was often crudely and rudely interpreted. It is not always interpreted wisely even to-day. But Christian teaching has done its part in attempting to soften race hatreds, the enormous difficulties of divergencies in colour, in culture, in capacity, the problems inevitably brought about by colonization, by conquest, by the impingement of so-called higher race upon so-called lower race, by conflicts of interest, by selfish exploitation. It has done something, at all events, to bring about in our relations with alien and subject and coloured races our modern conceptions of trusteeship, of equitable partnership, of fair opportunity and development. We may smile to-day at those who firmly believed in the story of Adam and Eve, and who made it an integral part of their religion and their theology, but we must not ignore the fact that, though the legend of Adam and Eve produced grim and unfortunate results in the doctrines of the Fall and of Original Sin, and of the awful doom to which all unbaptized men and women were liable, it did also help forward the cause of Universalism. For it meant that all men were descended from the same ancestor, and to that extent were of one blood and parentage, and stood in the same relation to God. Wilberforce

quotes some frantic defender of slavery who sought to argue that the negro was so wicked and debased a being that he was probably not descended from Adam at all; he came from some species neither quite animal nor quite human, yet on the whole nearer to the ourang-outang than to man. On the other hand, the Noah story did harm, because Ham and Canaan were cursed by their father and grandfather, and the negroes could be regarded as their descendants, and therefore as legitimately enslaved. The devil *in* man, as well as the devil outside him, knew how to quote Scripture for his own purposes! Moreover, the different tenets of a man's religion can be kept in water-tight compartments; his action may be affected by some and unaffected by others. Probably Wilberforce and many of his evangelical fellow-workers believed no less than his opponents in the eternity of hell and in everlasting punishments. Perhaps even the desire to save the negro from such a fate, and by emancipation to convert him more surely to true religion, *may* have stimulated some abolitionists' zeal. But so far as I can ascertain, it seems indubitable that American universalists were from the first strongly antagonistic to slave-holding and slavery, for they realized that universalism

beyond the grave demanded in consistency as much brotherhood as possible upon earth. In 1788 Elhanan Winchester wrote a pamphlet against the keeping of slaves, and in 1790, at the Philadelphia Convention of Universalists, "the holding of slaves was declared inconsistent with the union of the human race in a common Saviour, and the obligation to mutual and universal love which flow from that union."[1] Dr. Rush, writing to Winchester in 1791, says, "the universal doctrine prevails more and more in our country, particularly among persons eminent for their piety, in whom it is not a mere speculation, but a principle of action, prompting to practical godliness."[2]

The history and development of Universalism in England, Germany, and America can be read in many books, and a convenient outline is to be found in the article on Universalism in Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. Only in America has Universalism become the central and determining tenet of a large, distinct, and organized Church, with its own ministers, training colleges, etc. But England had an

[1] Eddy (R.), "History of the Universalists in the United States" in *American Church History*, vol. x, 1894, p. 416.

[2] *Biography of Rev. E. Winchester*, by E. M. Stone, 1830, p. 196.

important share in the foundation of that Church through the labours and missionary zeal of the Rev. John Murray, who reached America in 1770, and was actively engaged in preaching Universalism till 1809. His fragment of autobiography edited by his wife is a most curious and interesting little volume. I will quote from it one single sentence. Can we imagine it said by anybody in Palestine in the first century A.D.? "It gladdened my heart to believe that the inveterate enemy, from whom I had just parted upon the road, was included in the redemption it was my business to proclaim."

Murray's universalism, like Relly's from whom it was derived, was of a peculiar kind. He seems to have held that the redemptive work of Christ was adequate to wipe out all sin, and that after death there would be no disciplinary or purgatorial punishment for anybody. This view was regarded by many other universalists as erroneous and dangerous: it might lead to antinomian consequences. Much friction ensued between the two parties, and there was even a temporary secession. The present principles of the Church include the twin doctrines of the certainty of just retribution for sin, and the final harmony of all souls with God. The earlier American Universalists were in other respects

orthodox, but certain tendencies towards Unitarianism gradually made their appearance, and the two bodies are now, as it would seem, on intimate terms of sympathy and friendliness with each other. Meanwhile, the leaven has been working in all the Christian Churches. It shows itself in two directions: (1) much less is heard and written about hell and eternal punishment; the range of hell and the compass of its clutches are enormously curtailed; (2) it is no longer the abode or the state of heretics and unbelievers and such like, but it is reserved for wilful sinners who deliberately turn their backs upon God. We may even say that, with many teachers, hell, or an eternity of exclusion from the full beatitude of the blest, is only retained (1) out of a certain tenderness towards old creeds and teachings, and (2) out of supposed ethical and psychological difficulties: how can *wills* which voluntarily and wilfully rebel, which definitely choose evil and refuse good, ever be redeemed? Even Mr. Allin, with, as it seems to me, doubtful consistency, suggests that "the wilful sinner, though saved, may yet suffer a perpetual loss, a *poena damni* loss of the highest spiritual blessedness hereafter."[1] It may perhaps be questioned whether the *second* reason for such

[1] *Universalism Asserted*, p. 302.

eternal hell is not partly or unconsciously due to the presence of the *first*. But practically we may say that Universalism is tending to triumph all along the Christian line.

The growth and development of Universalism in the Jewish religion have still, so far as I am aware, to be written. A good monograph upon the subject is a great need. What may so far be found is somewhat fragmentary and inadequate. Indeed, the importance and dignity of the matter do not seem properly appreciated. This may be due to the fact that hell has been less of a worry and an interest to Jews than to Christians; there has been less dogmatism about it; it has not formed so important a part of the religion as a whole. On the one hand, it has caused less apprehension and agony; on the other hand, there has been less recoil from it. So that if there is both less insistence upon hell, there is also less systematic, eager, and well-argued universalism. I should add that since the modern recoil against eternal punishment and endless hell came to the fore in Christianity, Jewish writers have shown some pardonable desire to whitewash the Rabbis, and have displayed some partiality in dealing with the facts. Their interest has been stimulated from the outside, just as, for an earlier age, it is in old

books of Christian scholars that we find long chapters about Jewish conceptions of heaven and hell. Thus Eisenmenger, in his famous or infamous *Entdecktes Judentum* (1700) devotes some 140 pages to the subject (vol. ii, pp. 234–370). When it was important for Dean Farrar to get as accurate, and yet as favourable, an account as he could of Talmudic and Rabbinic views about the life after death, and the Last Judgment, purgatory, and hell, he was hard put to it to find adequate, modern, and up-to-date works upon the subject. So the sections about Jewish eschatology in his *Eternal Hope* and *Mercy and Judgment* are very queer compilations indeed: Talmudic and post-Talmudic quotations jostle one another in oddest fashion, mixed up with opinions from modern Rabbis and even from an editor of a weekly Jewish newspaper! The quotations are often misleading and not always entirely accurate. For the Rabbinical period the fullest and most trustworthy authority to-day is the very long excursus in the fourth volume of Strack-Billerbeck's *Rabbinical Commentary to the New Testament.* For a general view (leaning towards affectionate friendliness, but yet scholarly) the best account is unquestionably Mr. Morris Joseph's excellent article on "Salvation

(Jewish)" in Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*.

The truth is that it is exceedingly difficult to make any clear and definite statement about Rabbinic views concerning hell and the lot of the wicked after death. Every sort of view can be illustrated and supported by quotations from the Talmud and the Midrash: limited punishment, eternal punishment, annihilation, approaches to universalism—all these, and much else, can be found there, and no one opinion is much more characteristic than the other. It may even be said that there are only one or two statements of a fairly authoritative and dogmatic character; over and above these, there are innumerable assertions and remarks, sometimes half in earnest, sometimes half-humorous, sometimes deliberately exaggerated and picturesque, from dozens of different Rabbis. Often the particular sins which a particular Rabbi desired to attack were denounced by him as sins which rendered those who committed them excluded for ever from the life to come. The very same Rabbi who said this might on another occasion declare that repentance was quite adequate to obtain for such sinners, or for all sinners, admittance to the life to come. These Oriental exaggerations were

very common and doubtless well understood. Even in the two more authoritative statements Mr. Joseph may be right in doubting whether when, for example, it is declared that this or that person, or category of persons, would have no share in the life to come, "the authors of the statements meant the phrase to be taken literally," or whether "they were not speaking loosely, and meant rather to indicate the heinousness of the heresies or the offences specified."

The entire Jewish development was very different from the Christian development. In Christianity things gradually got worse, and more fixedly worse, and lasted so for some 1,000 years; in Judaism things gradually got better. Nevertheless, we find nothing in Rabbinic literature to correspond with Origen and other great minds who thought like him: later on (not even forgetting Maimonides) nothing like Erigena; nothing, I fancy, even like the universalists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Germany, England, and America.

It has to be admitted that an immense difference is made in the Rabbinical literature between the Jew and the Gentile. The growing tendency as regards the Jews is towards Universalism. Few, indeed, need, or will, remain for ever in Gehenna. Let a sinner, be he never so wicked,

but repent before he dies, and God is eager to pardon him. For God's nature inclines towards mercy, and he has a special love for Israel and for every Israelite. Thus almost all Israelites who get into Gehenna will get out again. For them Gehenna is but a purgatory, and not even a very long purgatory. The souls of very wicked Israelites will be either destroyed altogether (after a suitable period of Gehenna), or they will be, in the few worst cases of all, punished eternally. These "worst cases" are mainly renegades, arch-heretics, and deniers of God. Thus the ordinary Israelite, or even the fairly bad Israelite, and especially the repentant Israelite, have little or nothing to fear.

Very different is the case of the Gentiles. The Rabbinical literature is, on the whole, frankly and even naïvely particularist. The general view would seem to be that the beatitudes of the world to come are reserved for the Jews. Not many Gentiles get to them. How are they excluded? Mainly, I think, by annihilation. Either they are wholly destroyed, body and soul, at their death, or they are destroyed in the Gehenna to which, immediately after death, they are committed, or if they "rise" at the judgment, they rise to be destroyed. For the Gentiles are idolators, and *ipso facto*, or deduc-

tively, they are sinners, and moreover they are the enemies of Israel, and so they are the enemies of God. The chief sinners of the Gentiles might be in Gehenna for ever, but I fancy that this would not be the lot of the generality. On the other hand, a few righteous Gentiles would, after some purgatorial pains, or immediately after death, attain to the blessed life.

In some ways all this was worse than the Christian view; in some ways it was better. It was worse because the many for ever excluded Gentiles—excluded, I mean, from Heaven—were excluded not so much because of their sins as because of their enmity to Israel. It was not religious or theological dogma which excluded them, but national hatreds and the desire for divine retribution upon the oppressor and the foe. On the other hand, it was also better, because it was less dogmatic, more naïve and human, less fixed and tremendous, less closely connected with essential doctrines, and therefore easier to change. The famous saying of Rabbi Joshua, "The righteous among the nations shall have a share in the world to come," was capable of large development. And that development it gradually received. What the original Rabbi who said it meant by it, is not easy to say. I think he thought of a man who

was more or less a Theist, and also morally virtuous. But the way was left open for the saying to mean the good idolator, and so to assimilate the lot of the Gentile with the lot of the Jew. (The case of the Christian would need separate treatment, so I ignore him here.) Another good point was that there was no idea of Predestination. Man's will was free. Repentance till the moment of death was always possible for the Jew, and probably for the Gentile too, at least for a Gentile who was no idolator. And even for the idolator repentance could be of avail. He might repent of his idolatry! Repentance was conceived as a power or a grace against which no sin of any man, whether Jew or Gentile, was a bar. "God says, My hands are stretched out towards the penitent: I reject no creature who gives me his heart in penitence. Therefore it says, 'Peace, peace to the far and to the near.' To all who draw near to Me, I draw near, and I heal them."[1] The word for "creature" is *birya*, and it is fair to say that wherever the word *birya* is used, the human being generally is meant, and not merely the Israelite. Perhaps the finest and most "universalist" passage in the Rabbinical literature is the following. It is made up of several older parallel passages, the

[1] Midrash on Psalm cxx. *ad. fin.*

existence of which increases its significance and import. The ninth verse of Psalm ix. runs: "He shall rule the world with righteousness, and judge the peoples with uprightness." The Midrash asks: "What is 'with uprightness'? R. Alexander says, 'With the uprightness in them.' " [This hardly means "according to their own standards of morality" (so Mr. Joseph), which is too modern an interpretation, but either (1) according to the upright persons who have so far appeared among them, i.e. giving them the vicarious benefit of the righteousness of these particular persons, or (2) according to the righteousness which they possess, i.e. if any one of them has any good deed to show or manifests any desire to repent.] "He judges them through [the uprightness of] Rahab, Jethro, and Ruth. How? God says to [a man who belongs to the] peoples of the world [i.e. to a heathen]: Why did you not draw nigh to me? He answers, Because I was a thorough scoundrel and I was ashamed. God replies, Were you worse than Rahab, who dwelt in the house upon the town wall, and she received robbers and practised immorality? And did she not draw near to me, and did I not receive her, and did I not cause to descend from her prophets and righteous men? Or were you worse than Jethro,

who was priest to an idol: and when he came nigh to me, did I not receive him, and I caused to descend from him prophets and righteous men? And when Ruth the Moabitess came to me, did I not receive her and cause kings to be descended from her? Again, R. Levi said, God judges the peoples with uprightness. He judges them by night, when they sleep [and cease from] their iniquities; for by day they commit unchastity, and they rob and oppress: therefore God judges them by night when they are asleep —for then they cease from their sins—so that there may be for them a rising up in the world [to come]. Why? Because all are his creatures and the work of his hands. *Where is the potter who seeks that his vessels should be broken?* Therefore he judges them in the night, that they may stand [firm] in the world [to come]."[1] Moreover, there came developments. Even from Gehenna there were ways of escape. Repentance, it was suggested, was possible even there; or the prayers of the righteous on earth or in Heaven might be of avail; there could be "jail deliveries" from Gehenna, and at the end it would be

[1] Pesikta Rabbathi 167b. (ed. Friedmann, 1880). Midrash on Psalm ix. 9. Jer. Rosh Hashanah 57a, and the Yalkut on Psalm ix. 9. Cp. Bacher, *Agada der palästinischen Amoräer*, i. p. 198; ii. p. 324.

emptied. For such ideas there are quotable passages. In one very famous passage it is said, "For the sake of a single Amen which the wicked answer from Gehenna, they are delivered from its midst." And again, still more elaborately and picturesquely: "The Holy One will sit in the Garden of Eden and study [the Law], and all the righteous sit before him, and all the angels stand around. On God's right are the sun and the planets and the moon, on his left are the stars, and God explains to them the meanings of the new law which he is going to give them through the Messiah. And when they have finished the lesson (*hagada*), Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, stands on his feet and says [the Kaddish], May he be magnified and sanctified! And his voice goes from one end of the world to another, and all the world answer Amen, and even the wicked of Israel and the righteous of the nations who are left in Gehinnom answer and say Amen from the midst of Gehinnom, till the whole universe resounds, and their voice is heard by God. And he asks, 'What is this great noise which I have heard?' The angels of the service answer and say: 'Lord, these are the wicked in Israel and the righteous of the nations who are left in Gehinnom: they answer Amen from the midst of Gehinnom.'

Straightway the compassion of the Holy One is stirred exceedingly, and he says: 'Shall I add to the punishment they have already borne? It is the Evil Inclination which has caused them to sin.' Then God takes the keys of Gehinnom, and gives them to Michael and Gabriel before all the righteous, and says to them: 'Go and open the gates of Gehinnom, and bring them up from Gehinnom, as it is said, Open the gates, and a righteous people shall come through them who keep faithfulness (Isa. xxvi. 2). Straightway Michael and Gabriel go and open the forty thousand gates of Gehinnom, and bring them up from Gehinnom. . . . They take them by the hand, and bring them up as a man lifts up his neighbour and brings him by a cord from a pit, and the angels wash and anoint them, and heal them from the wounds of Gehinnom and clothe them in fair raiment, and take them by the hand, and bring them before God and before all the righteous, as though they had been made priests and men of honour, as it is said, Thy priests shall be clothed with salvation, and thy saints shall rejoice in goodness (2 Chron. vi. 41). 'Thy priests': these are the righteous of the nations, who are priests before God in this world, like Antoninus the son of Severus and his fellows; and 'thy saints': these are the

wicked in Israel, who are called saints, as it is said, Gather my saints together unto me (Psa. l. 5). And when the angels bring them to the gate of the Garden of Eden, the angels enter first and take counsel with the Holy One; then the Holy One says: 'Let them enter and see my glory.' And when they enter they fall on their faces, and worship and bless and praise his name."[1]

Nevertheless, in spite of such passages as these, I do not think there is any dogmatic and reasoned plea for universalism till quite modern times. That "the *sinners* of all creeds and nations" shall at last be purified and admitted to the eternal beatitudes is, I think, winning its way to becoming an accepted doctrine of every shade and variety of Judaism. For from no point of view can Judaism, as it seems to me, offer any objection to it. The old Rabbis, when they thought of man in the abstract, and not of the nations as enemies of Israel, could be appreciative enough of God's mercy and love for all his creatures. We may say that to modern

[1] Yalkut on Isaiah xxvi. 2, and elsewhere. The passage is frequently quoted in modern books. Cf. my article on "Rabbinic Conceptions of Repentance," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. xvi, 1904, p. 240–242; Mr. Joseph's article on 'Salvation in Hastings," p. 148, col. 1, etc.

Judaism the redemption of the sinner has become the necessary consequence of the goodness of God. "Thou dost not desire the death of the sinner, but rather that he should repent and live." Moreover, Judaism has been less troubled than Christianity by philosophical difficulties. It has not said, "Yes, but suppose the sinner refuses to repent, how then?" God will so influence the soul that none will refuse, or not desire, to repent. God will enable *all* to repent, and all souls, by repentance and remedial discipline, will at last be redeemed, and find their place in the courts of the Most High. Not only the *righteous* of all nations, but also the repentant *sinners* of all nations, will have their inheritance in the felicities of the world to come. In Judaism, then, the wheel has turned full circle: the orthodoxy of our poor Ezra, to which with such piteous and justified hesitation he had to adhere, has to-day become a discarded horror to which no Jew, as I should imagine, would render homage.

Thus the inherent Universalism of Judaism and its specific doctrine concerning the goodness of God, his kingdom and his glory, on the one hand, and concerning repentance and forgiveness upon the other, has enabled it gradually to overcome the lower human desires for vengeance

and triumph over the oppressor and the foe. It has assimilated its conceptions of the life beyond the grave to its universalist conceptions of the future upon earth, as expressed in the old and famous prayer for the coming of the time "when the world will be perfected under the kingdom of God, and when he will turn unto himself all the wicked of the earth," or again, in other well-known words, for the time when "all creatures shall form a single band to do thy will with a perfect heart."

A world-outlook for us to-day is no achievement and no merit. In one sense there is nobody who can help having a world-outlook. For the whole earth lies mapped out before him; every nook and cranny of it, whether peopled or desolate, desert or ice-bound, is becoming more and more investigated and known. And the relation of different races to one another, more especially the relation of the more civilized to the less civilized, of us whites to the black and the yellow and the red, is forcing itself more and more upon the anxious attention of all. It might even be said that some world attitude, whether bad or good, wise or foolish, narrow or broad, is compulsory for everybody. What we may hope and pray for is that religious universalism, and what we may perhaps call the universalism of

the higher morality, may fit in with and sustain and vivify one another. Neither universalism is without its difficulties. The theological objections—ethical, religious, and psychological—to a universalism of salvation beyond the grave, over and above the difficulties of *any* conception of life beyond the grave at all—can be, as I think, adequately overcome. The more we, as theists, with our present wide knowledge, reflect upon universalism, the more it must (as I venture to think) seem the inevitable corollary to any belief in the perfect goodness, righteousness, or love of a God, who is still, in any true sense, the God of Isaiah, of the twenty-third Psalmist, of Akiba, and of Jesus. *They* could not see this: we, standing on their shoulders, and seeing farther and more clearly than they, we can, we do. Therefore we may also hope that the universalism of religion may help what I have called the universalism of the higher morality not to despair even before the terrible problems which the actual facts of life thrust before our eyes and minds. No mere theories of equalitarian humanitarianism can solve puzzles such as the negro problem in the United States or the native puzzle in South Africa. Such theories, rashly translated into action without regard to eugenics, or race physiology, or the complicated

circumstances of reality, might produce great evil. But we may, at least, hope that religious universalism may help to sustain and encourage practical workers in step by step approaches and alleviations. It may be a background for promoting good will, patience, and moderation. There are other puzzles, too, in some respects less practically difficult, in others more baffling and heart-rending. What are we to say about noble races such as the Indians of North America who seem slowly to wither away before the coming of the white man, or of races to whom the white man has been or is as a blight, who have caught little more from him than his faults and his diseases, and who have passed, or are passing, away before they have had any chance to grow and to develop? What about the vanished races of the past before civilization began? Is there, and can there be, any such thing as equality? In what effective sense can there be universal brotherhood? Our human doubts invade the sphere of the divine. Can we say with any adequate meaning that God loved the vanished Tasmanian aborigines as much as he loved the Englishman? Does he care for the disappearing pigmies of the Malay Peninsula as much as for the European? Our minds become stricken with sore questionings and doubts, and

we can but seek to hold on, *coûte que coûte*, to the larger hope. May the world to come redress this harsh world which has proved so cruel, so uneducative, so ruinous, to so many millions of the children of men. Just because we still cling to our universalism and to the doctrine of the impartial and loving God, we will re-echo wistfully our poor Ezra's words: Can we understand and can we love the creation better than the Creator? Not for us, as for Ezra, is the precious to be identified with the few. In God's larger world the precious must be all. "Non est insanabile aliquid factori suo." What God has created God can develop and save.

CHAIRMAN'S SUBSEQUENT REMARKS

WE have listened to a most instructive, gracious and optimistic address that does credit to the mind and honour to the heart of Dr. Montefiore. Many points of his arresting discourse could be dwelt upon. But I must be very brief, for I would not detain you. It was a special pleasure to hear our Lecturer's praise of Origen, in my opinion the most learned and liberal-minded of the Christian Church Fathers. The fact that Origen was condemned only after well-nigh three centuries of Origenistic controversies, argues that universalism, in some form or other, had many supporters in the Church. Moreover, in particular, it was his doctrine of pre-existence that was formally anathematized rather than his universalism, if I remember rightly, though that condemnation was bad enough. But Origen is not yet done with; he is rather now, at long last, coming into his own again, now when Platonic philosophizing is being recognized as having played the part of a potent formative element in certain Christian theological developments. And we—some of us, at any rate—are just now waiting impatiently

for the appearance of the promised great work of that most capable Origenistic scholar, de Faye.

But in general, with regard to this terrible doctrine of eternal damnation for the many, or, indeed, of everlasting condemnation of even a single soul—to-day, from our knowledge of history and culture and the psychology of religion, we can easily persuade ourselves that such blasphemy against the Divine Goodness issues from the evil imagination of the heart of man and not from any truly spiritually inspired source. Whether or not man is made in the image of God, it is indisputable that man has been very busy throughout the ages in making his gods in his own image.

Dr. Montefiore has covered a wide ground in his instructive survey of progress towards universalism. But had it fallen within his purview, the ground might have been easily extended beyond the frontiers of Judaism and Christianity. Not to speak of Islam, which belongs to the same branch of the tree of faith, there are other great faiths where developments towards universalism can be pointed to, and which have been free from the dogma of eternal damnation from the start. To mention one of them. As a whole-souled sympathizer with universalistic

ideas myself, I have always been charmed by that optimistic and joyous doctrine which is specially emphasized in the later developments of the Mahāyāna type of Buddhism. According to this form of faith, not only every human being, but also every living creature, is held to be a potential Buddha, a Buddha-to-be. That is universalism with a vengeance. It is impossible to go farther in the ideal of a compassion that would embrace love for everything that lives and breathes as the fundamental requisite for entrance into the holy of holies of the Divine Wisdom.

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Mr. H. LOEWE, who proposed a vote of thanks to the Lecturer, said:

THE Fourth Book of Ezra is a piece of literature that well merits attention, and for his lecture Mr. Montefiore has earned a full "Mead" of thanks—if the Chairman will permit the expression. To the originality and judgment which characterized his treatment of the subject, it is superfluous to allude. One does not recite a man's praises to his face, especially when for half a century he has enjoyed an assured position in the domain of scholarship. Just one sentence will suffice as an example of the value of this

paper. The best edition of IV Ezra is the wholly admirable one of Box, which probably everyone present has consulted in preparation for this afternoon. Now that Commentary, than which nothing better can be desired, does not, in summarizing the theology and eschatology of the book, treat this highly important problem with the emphasis that it deserves. It is due to Mr. Montefiore's critical acumen that the question of universalism has been raised in connection with this early document, and the inferences which he has drawn are of very great moment. That Mr. Montefiore should have selected this theme must be a source of special gratification to a Jewish society, for since the time of Rosenthal, Jews have not contributed much to the study of IV Ezra, the notable exceptions being Schechter and Kohler, whose references have been mainly indirect.

The date of this book tends to invest it with special interest: for one thing, there is not much room for speculation about the times of composition or redaction. Secondly, this book belongs to the fascinating period, after the great catastrophe of 70 and before that of Bar Kochba, when the Canon of the Bible was being formed at Jamnia. It must have clamoured for admission with other candidates, but while Akiba

sponsored Canticles and Ecclesiastes, IV Ezra found no supporter and has remained extra-canonical. The reason is not very far to seek. After the Temple fell, the *raison d'être* of the Sadducees vanished. What happened to them? They disappeared. Where and how? They were simply absorbed into Catholic Judaism. Soon arose the question of the books which they brought with them. Were they orthodox? A little judicious handling, combined with the tradition of Solomonic authorship, was sufficient to turn the scale. Hence we can account for the popularity of pseudepigraphy, a literary device to which we owe the preservation of Sadducean books. But the compiler of IV Ezra was unsuccessful in his efforts to win recognition for his work. Though he took refuge in the great name of the Deutero-lawgiver, it availed him naught. He was certainly no Sadducee. What, then, was wrong with the book? Professor Box suggests that it was his attitude towards the Law. Professor Box ascribes to him a Pauline antinomianism that can hardly be justified from the text. If Professor Box's interpretation were correct, the book would, in a very little while, have become recognized as definitely Christian. It is, however, open to question whether the compiler really attacks the Law.

The well-known passage in ix. 36, which Professor Box compares with Romans iii. 20, surely does not mean that the Law is impotent to redeem a sinner. What Jew would ever have written such a thing? The Law is impotent only if unobserved. He who breaks the Law and then blames it for his consciousness of failure is like the patient who refuses to take his medicine but who blames his doctor for not making him well. One may venture the suggestion that the book remained uncanonical because it was not a *ktēma es aei*: it was definitely ephemeral. Its purpose was to stabilize faith amid the doubts of an exceptional age and to deal with problems of crucial urgency. Hence it is interested more in the survival of Israel than in the corollary, Universalism and the fate of the Gentiles. Because it was not sufficiently universalistic, because its teaching was transitory, the book never became part of Judaism's eternal heritage. Nevertheless, as Mr. Montefiore has shown, there is no lack of material under the second head. Not all the references to future salvation are confined to Israel. The equivalent of *Berioth*, creatures, suggests all mankind, and when the compiler says that a few shall be saved he is referring to righteousness and wickedness generally and not merely to the

Jews. But the Jews constituted his main problem, because Judaism at that difficult hour had to meet a double attack; Rome from without and nascent Christianity from within. At times of crisis leaders concentrate on the immediate danger and postpone the consideration of the future. Their chief care is defence, and the attack on their foes rather than their regeneration. During the World War most people thought of crushing the Germans, only Dr. Lyttleton of converting them. Now most people support Dr. Lyttleton, for to the credit of humanity the polemic, useful in its day, fails to endure for all time. The corruptible does not put on incorruption. And, to come still nearer home, have not sometimes the defenders of one form or another of Judaism deemed it to be their task to attack those from whom they differ rather than to win them over?

If a reader says, "We give thanks, we give thanks," twice, the Mishna says that he should be silenced. Yet a second *Modim*, or expression of gratitude, rises instinctively to our minds at this moment. After this passing tribute to the lecturer, a word remains for him in whose memory this lecture was founded, and for his lamented daughter, Nina Salaman. It is particularly fitting that Mr. Montefiore should

occupy the lecturer's desk to-day, for between him and Arthur Davis there was so much in common. Sincerity of purpose, soundness in scholarship, critical judgment, combined with a passion for Judaism and Jewish learning and zeal in defence of the faith—all these qualities are his and were Arthur Davis's. Arthur Davis was Victorian: Mr. Montefiore is a bulwark of Victorian virtues in an age that deems these virtues vain. Arthur Davis lived and wrote in the days when scholarship was typified by Neubauer and Steinschneider and Joseph Jacobs; the pulpit, by Artom, Marks, and Singer; the press, by Asher Myers; and philanthropy, by F. D. Mocatta. Arthur Davis's great work was done in an age of research that was personal and not vicarious. You can visualize this in a flash by remembering that then there was no Jewish Encyclopædia. That invaluable aid has made us all lazy. Much, too much, that is written and said to-day is Jewish Encyclopædia and water, and very often not good water at that. He, whom we honour this afternoon, himself delved and toiled and so his achievements stand the test of time. To-day we recall with gratitude the life-work of Arthur Davis, his memory for a blessing and an enduring example.

In the name of the meeting I have the honour to propose to you, Sir, that a cordial vote of thanks be accorded to Dr. C. G. Montefiore, the twelfth Arthur Davis Lecturer, for the noteworthy address to which it has just been our privilege to listen.

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Mr. HERBERT M. ADLER, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Chairman, said:

As a friend and fellow-worker of Arthur Davis I appreciate the opportunity which has been afforded me of adding a few words to these proceedings. In our collaboration on the Festival Prayer-Book I had the chance of seeing and admiring his fine nature, his self-effacing simplicity and his zeal for scholarship *lishmah*. His memory for a blessing.

It is my pleasant duty to ask you to accord your thanks to Mr. Mead, who has shown himself a worthy chairman at a memorable lecture. He is, as you know, the editor of the *Quest*, and is a prolific writer on the subject of mysticism. Indeed, like Ezra, he is a ready scribe.

How strange it is that the author of the book which has formed the subject of this lecture should have taken the *nom de plume* of "Ezra".

Two more opposite characters could hardly be conceived. The one a questioning, sensitive, unsatisfied soul; the other a practical leader of men, a pioneer in the resettlement of his people on their ancient land, and the stalwart regenerator of their religion. The one all perplexity; the other all action.

And yet for such a man as the second Ezra there may well be room in the development of religious thought. An interrogation mark may be as illuminating as a note of exclamation, and a deep question may contribute more than a shallow answer. Indeed, if that had not been recognized long ago, the Scriptural canon would have lost one of its brightest gems: the book of Job. For here, too, the question goes home better than the answer. It is the riddle which impresses itself rather than the solution.

Even to-day we must admit that most of the problems that troubled our Ezra are still waiting for an answer. Yet to one of them the centuries seem to have furnished a reply. He asks why Israel, if they are indeed a chosen people, should alone be landless and homeless. Now, after nearly two thousand years, we have come to see in our people's dispersion a pathway to the fulfilment of Abraham's mission: "By thee shall all the

families of the earth be blessed." Isolation may have its comforts, and the fireside may be warmer than the market-place, but it has its limitations as well; and the calamity may, in fact, be an opportunity.